

To Whom It May Concern:

I am reading this personal statement in regards to the harmful effects that Mr. Pat caused me and my family. I was mentally, sexually, physically, and financially abused by Mr. Pat. First, allow me to present myself My name is Andres. I was born in the Dominican Republic on August 21st, 1997. I am the oldest child of three.

In the Dominican Republic, I lived with my father, mother, and two younger siblings in a small metal house with poor living conditions. Rain would leak through the roof and walls. There were times where we couldn't afford to eat. My father, a truck driver who resold used appliances and my mother, a farmer to the few acres of land in the backyard of our home, both earned a very low income. I would skip out on school programs to work with my father so I could help support my family.

In July of 2012, when I was 15 years old, my parents and I went to the mall center about an hour away from our home. Mr. Pat was operating a small food booth. He and my parents engaged in conversation regarding the food. They exchanged contact information before leaving. After that, Mr. Pat kept in contact while he was away, and would visit us when he would return to the Dominican Republic. Mr. Pat would keep in touch with my parents for the next three years.

In July 2015, when I was 18 years old, Mr. Pat visited our home again. This time, he took an interest in me that he didn't before. He asked me how school was going, what I would like to do with my life, whether I want to travel outside of the Dominican Republic someday. He then offered to help bring me to the U.S. and took down my contact information.

Once Mr. Pat returned to the U.S., he contacted my mom and requested that my parents allow him to bring me to the U.S.

Mr. Pat offered a free place for me to stay, as well as free food, and told her that he found a high school I could attend. We recommended that I finish high school in the Dominican Republic since I only had two months left, and then travel to the U.S. for college. Mr. Pat told us that college would be too expensive and that this was the best option.

After convincing my parents, Mr. Pat arranged my F-1 student visa to the U.S.

Before I left for the U.S. Mr. Pat asked me to run an errand and pick something up from an older male friend of his also named Andres.

On October 19th, 2015, I traveled to the U.S.

I was enrolled in high school only for a short period of time until Mr. Pat told me that I was no longer allowed to attend. After I was forced to stop attending school, my student visa became invalid, making me present in the U.S. illegally.

Mr. Pat then kicked me out of his house, leaving me with nowhere to stay and no money to support myself, except for the storage room below Mr. Pat's restaurant, where I worked over 40 hours a week for less than 1 dollar an hour.

I was forced to live in very poor conditions. There was only a lamp and a work light in the storage room. There were no windows, and no bath or shower. I was forced to use the restaurant's bathroom to take a makeshift shower, having to clean the bathroom once I was finished.

Over the course of my stay in the storage room, I was quickly subject to forced sexual conduct by Mr. Pat. He began to threaten to contact immigration authorities and have me deported if I did not engage in sexual acts with him. Mr. Pat told me that I needed to engage in sexual acts with him if I wanted him to provide me with food or housing and to stay out of legal trouble.

I told Mr. Pat that I'm not gay and did not want to engage in any sexual acts with him. Regardless of my objections, I was forced into doing so by the threats that Mr. Pat made.

Mr. Pat performed oral sex on me and forced me to perform anal sex on him. I was forced to do so several times per week in both Mr. Pat's restaurant and home. Mr. Pat used psychological abuse, intimidation, and threats of legal process to maintain control over me as a forced laborer and continued victim of Mr. Pat's sexual assaults.

Mr. Pat would take nude photos and videos of various sexual acts I was forced into. Mr. Pat told me that he shared these images with other men and did not care about my objections. One of the men he shared the content with was his friend back in the Dominican Republic, Andres.

While I am working to heal from what has been done to me, I am still afraid to return to the Dominican Republic. I am also afraid for my family who are still there. Mr. Pat has many friends back in the Dominican Republic, like Andres, and I am afraid that he may send someone after them to get revenge against me for reporting him to and cooperating with law enforcement officials.

Even on normal days, I can imagine Mr. Pat threatening and abusing me. The trauma that lives inside of me caused by Mr. Pat made huge changes in my life that has impacted my social life and relationships with the closest ones.

Since being free from Mr. Pat I have attended Saint Paul College where I received both high school and college credit.

I graduated with my high school diploma in May of 2018 and have applied for a programming network program for more school.

I am dedicated to my life here since being free of Mr. Pat and continue to work towards the education I was promised.